



# MetroWest+

## Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1)

**Planning Inspectorate Reference: TR040011**

**Applicant: North Somerset District Council**

### 9.3.9 ExA.SoCG-SCC.D1.V1 – Statement of Common Ground

Between:

- (1) North Somerset District Council; and
- (2) Somerset County Council

**Version: 1**

**Date: November 2020**



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<b>Author</b>	Steven Penaluna
<b>Title</b>	Principal Transport Policy Officer (North Somerset District Council, MetroWest Phase 1 Project Team)
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## 1. ABBREVIATIONS

2008 Act	Planning Act 2008
Applicant	North Somerset District Council
DCO	Development Consent Order
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
SCC	Somerset County Council
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground

In the text, "DCO Document Reference" refers to the DCO document reference number as shown on the documents on the Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1) [project page on the PINS website](#).

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 This Statement of Common Ground ("SoCG") has been prepared by North Somerset District Council (the Applicant) and Somerset County Council ("SCC") to set out the areas of agreement and disagreement between the parties in relation to the Development Consent Order ("DCO") application for the Portishead Branch Line (MetroWest Phase 1) ("the DCO Scheme") based on consultation to date.
- 2.2 This SoCG comprises an agreement log which has been structured to reflect topics of interest to SCC in relation to the application for the DCO Scheme. Topic specific matters agreed and not agreed between SCC and the Applicant are included.

## **3. SCHEME OVERVIEW**

- 3.1 The Applicant has applied to the Planning Inspectorate ("PINS") for a DCO to construct the Portishead Branch Line under the Planning Act 2008 (the "Application"). The Application was made on 15 November 2019 under PINS reference TR040011 and was accepted for examination on 12 December 2019.
- 3.2 The DCO Scheme will provide an hourly (or hourly plus) railway service between Portishead and Bristol Temple Meads Railway Station, with stops at Portishead, Pill, Parson Street and Bedminster.
- 3.3 The DCO Scheme comprises the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ("NSIP") as defined by the Planning Act 2008 ("the 2008 Act") to construct a new railway 5.4 kilometres long between Portishead and the village of Pill, and associated works including a new station and car park at Portishead, a refurbished station and new car park at Pill and various works along the existing operational railway line between Pill and Ashton Junction where the DCO Scheme will join the existing railway. Ashton Junction is located close to the railway junction with the Bristol to Exeter Mainline at Parson Street.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to Schedule 1 of the draft Order (DCO Document Reference 3.1) for more detail.

## **4. OVERVIEW OF ENGAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1 This section briefly summarises the consultation that the Applicant has had with SCC. For further information on the consultation process please see the Consultation Report (DCO application document reference 5.1).

### **4.2 Pre-application**

4.2.1 The Applicant has engaged with SCC on the DCO Scheme during the pre-application process, both in terms of informal non-statutory engagement and formal consultation carried out pursuant to Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008.

4.2.2 No responses were received from SCC at any stage of consultation.

4.2.3 As a neighbouring Local Planning Authority, SCC was invited to submit an adequacy of consultation representation to PINS following submission of the application. They stated that, in their opinion, The Applicant had complied in relation to the application with section 42, section 47 and section 48 of the Planning Act 2008.

### **4.3 Overview of key issues raised at the Section 56 Relevant Representation Stage**

4.3.1 At the Section 56 Relevant Representation stage, SCC raised the following key issues:

- (i) No negative or cumulative impacts have been identified to arise in Somerset from the MetroWest Phase 1 project;
- (ii) that positive socio-economic and environmental effects are expected to arise from the delivery of this first phase of the wider MetroWest project both for Somerset and the wider Peninsula area.

## 5. ISSUES

4.4 Within the table below, the different topics and areas of agreement and disagreement between SCC and the Applicant are set out.

Topic	Somerset County Council Position	North Somerset District Council Position	Status
<b>Key issues raised at the Section 56 Relevant Representation stage</b>			
<b>Legislation and policy</b>	<p>The MetroWest Phase 1 project will contribute to delivery on our adopted and emerging transport policy, business growth and other plans for Somerset County Council. As a nearby authority for the MetroWest project, Somerset County Council (SCC) is not directly affected by the proposed construction of the MetroWest DCO works associated with the Portishead line. But it is agreed that SCC and its communities, particularly in the north of the county, will benefit from MetroWest Phase 1 project and the new and improved commuter services on the Severn Beach line where they will reduce car usage on the M5 and neighbouring roads through that part of our county. We also appreciate the indirect beneficial impacts resulting from enhancement of</p>	<p><i>The Applicant notes the supporting comments.</i></p>	<p><i>Agreed.</i></p>

Topic	Somerset County Council Position	North Somerset District Council Position	Status
	<p>transport infrastructure in the wider West of England and Peninsula areas. The MetroWest Phase 1 project can also be expected to support economic growth along the M5 economic corridor, including the Hinkley Housing and Gravity Enterprise Zone around the Bridgwater area. The scheme will support modal shift to sustainable commuting and travel - diverting journeys from road to rail, contributing to combatting climate change and congestion – a significant challenge for the north of the county</p> <p>Conclusions: 1. No negative or cumulative impacts have been identified to arise in Somerset from the MetroWest Phase 1 project. 2. It is agreed that positive socio-economic and environmental effects are expected to arise from the delivery of this first phase of the wider MetroWest project both for Somerset and the wider Peninsula area. These should make a positive contribution to the delivery of a range of transport, planning and climate change policies in Somerset and the wider</p>		





Topic	Somerset County Council Position	North Somerset District Council Position	Status
	<p>Peninsula area (of which SCC is part). We consider that it will be beneficial for Somerset County Council to be registered as an 'Interested Party' for the MetroWest Phase 1 Examination to enable this Council to respond to any issues arising during proceedings that are relevant to this Council as planning and highway authority.</p>		
<b>Post- Application and Examination</b>			
<b>Scope of SoCG</b>	<p>Somerset County Council notes the content of the Rule 6 letter issued by PINS on 7 September 2020. A request is made for a SoCG between the Applicant and Somerset County Council, including but not limited to the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning policy;</li> <li>• The Need and Principle of the Proposed Development and Examination of Alternatives;</li> <li>• Ecology and Biodiversity;</li> <li>• Climate change;</li> <li>• Construction Effects on people and communities;</li> <li>• Design;</li> <li>• Draft Development Consent Order;</li> </ul>	<p><i>The Applicant notes Somerset County Council's position.</i></p>	<p><i>Agreed.</i></p>

Topic	Somerset County Council Position	North Somerset District Council Position	Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water resources, drainage and flood risk;</li> <li>• Historic Environment;</li> <li>• Highways and Transport including Public Rights of Way and cycle routes;</li> <li>• Landscape and Visual impacts;</li> <li>• Noise, air quality and disturbance during construction and operation; and</li> <li>• Construction Environmental Management Plan/ Code of Construction Practice.</li> </ul> <p>Somerset County Council is not a host authority for the DCO Scheme and does not intend to comment on these individual topics/elements of the Application. Somerset County Council has given proportionate consideration to the detail of the DCO Scheme in light of its proximity to the authority boundary, focusing on cross-boundary matters.</p>		

## 6. AGREEMENT ON THIS STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

This Statement of Common Ground has been jointly prepared and agreed by:

<b>The Stakeholder</b>
<i>Name:</i> Andrew Wiles
<i>Signature:</i> 
<i>Position:</i> Service Commissioning Manager: Transport Policy
<i>On behalf of:</i> Somerset County Council
<i>Date:</i> 02/11/2020

<b>The Applicant</b>
<i>Name:</i> James Willcock
<i>Signature:</i> 
<i>Position:</i> MetroWest Phase 1 Programme Manager
<i>On behalf of:</i> North Somerset District Council
<i>Date:</i> 02/11/2020